

in possession of forgiveness, justification, regeneration, and eternal life. Faith secures for him an inheritance which will outlast this life, and make him rich thru-out eternity. With gold man can only trade with this world; but with faith man can hold high commerce with heaven. Gold will gain for man access into high places, and presence among the great ones on the earth; but the poorest man who has faith may secure for himself the "heavenly places in Christ," and gain for himself audience and fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Ghost. It will write his name among the worthies whose names are in the Book of Life, and on the roll of honor which God himself makes.

It is more precious than gold, because it is more enduring. Few men in this world have been successful in winning much gold, and fewer still have been enabled to keep it.

At last it must perish with all things earthly and temporal; but faith endures so long as life lasts, and introduces us into place and surroundings where the eternal wealth of God is. A man with never so much gold must leave it at his deathbed; but faith never forsakes a man until it has put him safely across the dark river and handed him over to God, a saved soul. The more we spend our gold, the less we have of it; but the more we expend of our faith, the more it increases. Afflictions and trials diminish the value of gold, by rendering us incapable of enjoying what it might otherwise secure for us; but trial only makes faith to shine out with more resplendent beauty, and hightens its value. Gold often leads man into sin and death; but faith leads a man always away from sin and always into life. Gold will rust and corrode and drown men in perdition; but the tried faith of God's people will be formed unto "praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Rich in gold and a stranger to God, might be the brief biography of many a man in this world, while "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom" is the inspired biography of the poorest of this world who have sought and found him who is revealed to and made over to our faith. Let us covet this best gift, and increase it by using it, and rejoice in its purification by every trial which God sends upon us.

THE FAITHFUL MINISTER

It is all important that every man who undertakes to be a preacher of the Gospel should recognize the necessity that is laid upon him to do the best and hardest work that he is capable of doing. Duty and ambition, love to God and men, every motive that appeals to the heart of a true man, urges faithful work. Here are some of the requirements made upon the preacher of the present day: He must make himself felt among such educating influences as the press, the platform, and the public schools. He must speak to those whose privilege it is to hear the great orators of the world. He must

strive to reach the hearts and win the attention of those who are subject to mighty temptations from evil influences. He must fight against great evils, that in the opinion of the world have come to stay. He must work without the help that preachers of past generations received from home government and family religion. He must stand up against the tyranny of fashion, the deluge of impure literature, the curse of the drink traffic, the evil of Sabbath desecration, the nervous haste of the world to make money, and the increase of an education that is almost, and in some cases altogether, antireligious in its character. It is natural to ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?" but let the true preacher remember that God, who calls him to the work, works with him.—*United Presbyterian.*

HEAVEN

No thought has given so much hope and comfort to striving and suffering women and men as that of heaven, the abode of which we hope to enter after our eyes have closed on all of this mortal existence. Where is heaven? What is heaven like? are questions which many have tried to answer. Some have seized upon the symbolism of the Book of Revelation and conceived of heaven only under the form of the splendid imagery of that book. Others have sought to shape their conceptions by analogies drawn from this earthly existence. Some have dwelt upon the spiritual aspect of the heavenly life until they have come to conceive of it simply as a state which we enter at death, and in no sense as a place. Others, running to the opposite extreme, have so entirely forgotten our spiritual needs as to confine themselves almost entirely to the conception of a sensuous heaven, to enter which is to find all that soul and body need for content and happiness.

In studying this subject several thoughts present themselves to us which may claim pre-eminent worth. The first of these is that the state of the mind and heart is the first condition of happiness both in this world and the next. No matter what the outward conditions may be, happiness is impossible if the spirit of the man is tormented by sin. And that he may be at rest, it is necessary for him to be in perfect accord with God, with himself, and with the world in which he lives. "The kingdom of God is within you," said the Lord, and human experience verifies the saying.

If, however, heaven consisted wholly in a spiritual condition and not also in a place as real and substantial as the present world, the life of the inhabitants would be one of purely subjective thoughts and experiences. Here the world without is the vast instrument for the awakening of man to self-consciousness, all truth being verified by the exterior world of nature and of history. Apart from the world in which he lives man, indeed, could scarcely be said to possess any clear self-knowledge, and independent of that he can

have no knowledge of any sort. So dependent are we upon physical and material things that "the first step in the communication of a fact of individual consciousness is changing it from a psychical fact to a physical fact." We have no knowledge of any other mode of communication and cannot readily conceive of another. If, moreover, those who enter heaven are clothed with spiritual bodies, the endowment of a body necessarily implies a world corresponding in substance and nature to the corporeity, as well as spirituality, of the beings who inhabit it.

One of the most wonderful of all facts known to us is the manner in which the world of nature becomes a medium for the communication of truth to us from God. There is nothing, from a grain of sand to a mountain, a drop of dew to the ocean, a blade of grass to a gigantic cedar, an insect to a monster of the wilderness, which is not a medium for this marvellous revelation. However necessary spiritual truth may be for man, his demand for knowledge of every other kind is only less important. His existence here would be narrowed to a pitiable degree, if it were not for the wealth of truth revealed thru nature and material things. We cannot suppose that this mode of revelation is simply temporary; that when we advance to the highest realm of life we say farewell forever to all truth except the moral and spiritual.

The physical and material world, moreover, presents itself to us as a field for human activity. Is the marvellous fitness of man for dominion over lower forms of life, for joy in the companionship of nature animate and inanimate, his ability to use the material elements for his comfort and happiness, and, even more, his genius for creation, to end with his earthly existence? In every instance known to us life expands as it advances. Its possibilities grow richer and more manifold; its opportunities multiply; its powers of thought and action increase; its range in every respect widens. Is this all to pass away, and are human energies to be occupied simply with those things which are purely of a spiritual nature? This does not seem reasonable. It seems to us that under such conditions even the spiritual life itself would shrink and wither. We have reason, we think, to believe that there is something eternal in everything around us here that God has made. The same flower that blooms here may never bloom in heaven; the mountains and seas we look upon now, we may never see again; the animals we have learned to love here, may never greet us there; but it does not, therefore, follow that in the heavenly world the thoughts of God, which these creatures express, may not re-appear in more beautiful and higher forms.

Whatever we may conceive heaven to be, we can rest assured that those who are permitted to enter it will find themselves in every respect at home. That life will in no respect be more restricted than this, but in-